



02193  
THE DEADLY  
HANDS OF  
KUNG FU

DEC. №7  
75¢



NO MAN CAN STAND AGAINST...

# THE DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU™

**BRUCE LEE**

GREATER THAN EVER IN

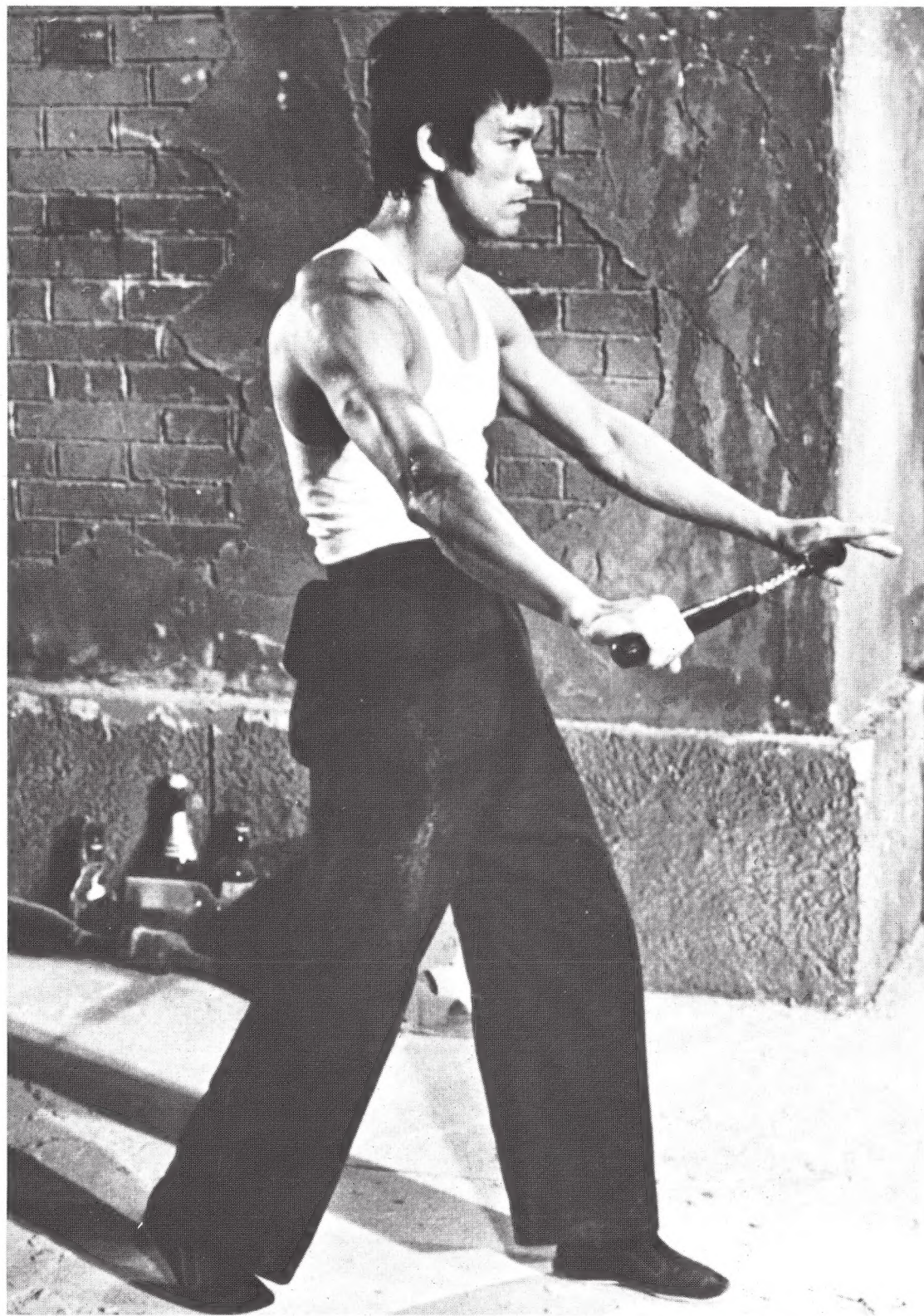
**RETURN OF THE  
DRAGON**



PLUS: MORE MARTIAL ARTS MAYHEM WITH  
MASTER OF KUNG FU \* SONS OF THE TIGER!

**MARVEL**







STAN LEE PRESENTS:

December, 1974 Vol. 1, No. 7

# THE DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU™



## CONTENTS

### THE PAST ASSASSINS ..... 5

Shang-Chi is stalked through the city streets by hired gunmen, while a menace from his past becomes deadlier... in the present!

### ENTER THE LETTERS ..... 24

Your letters comment on our fourth issue... for the second time! Plus, the Readers' Poll returns.

### THE WAY OF THE DRAGON VS. THE WAY OF THE MASS-SELL MENACE ..... 28

Is *Return of the Dragon* really a sequel to *Enter the Dragon*? Is *Return of the Dragon* really Bruce Lee's last movie? An in-depth critique with behind the scenes information.

### BLOCKING AN ATTACK ..... 38

Frank McLaughlin returns with more illustrated lessons in self-defense.

### TIGERS IN A MIND-CAGE ..... 45

The Sons of the Tiger are trapped... and their captors are the one enemy they can not defeat... their own most deadly fear!

MARV WOLFMAN  
Editor-in-Chief

DON MCGREGOR  
Editor

DAVID KRAFT  
Associate Editor

JOHN ROMITA  
Art Director

MARCIA GLOSTER & BARBARA ALTMAN  
Design

LEN GROW  
Production

NORA MACLIN  
Design Assistant

Cover: NOREM

Editorial Staff:  
CHRIS CLAREMONT,  
SCOTT EDELMAN,  
IRENE VARTANOFF,  
MICHELE WOLFMAN

Writers This Issue:  
BILL MANTLO,  
DON MCGREGOR,  
FRANK McLAUGHLIN,  
DOUG MOENCH,  
TONY ISABELLA

Artists This Issue:  
BOB McLEOD, FRANK McLAUGHLIN,  
AL MILGROM, GEORGE PEREZ,  
MIKE VOSBERG



# UNDER THE PAGODA

By J. David Warner

**I**t has now been over a year since the Dragon entered, vaulting into the mysterious and deadly Island of Han...

Unfortunately, despite its misleading title, RETURN OF THE DRAGON has little or no connection with ENTER THE DRAGON. It does not feature the same protagonist as ENTER, merely the same actor — BRUCE LEE. Nor was it produced with American audiences in mind, having been intended originally for Chinese audiences only. Finally, it was made *before* ENTER, and the two films — in plot, purpose and philosophy — have almost nothing to do with each other.

The production values themselves are inferior to those of ENTER, owing to a low budget and lackluster Chinese film techniques, since Chinese producers generally go strictly for properties that make money — they don't care a great deal about art, they want Box Office! It's a perfectly valid theory, but thankfully not all producers think that way.

I imagine the opening credits were done especially for Western release, but they are really quite imaginative, with lovely montage animation. Here we learn that Bruce Lee scripted, co-produced, directed and stars in the film.

All right!

The story begins with a soft-frame close up of Bruce Lee's face. There's something ghostly in seeing it there, something haunting. Only twice did this feeling strike me — that this incredible person I was watching on screen no longer existed in reality; the wonder of film is the illusions it can create, illusions that are short-lived realities. And, for at least ninety minutes, up there on that silver screen, Bruce Lee lives!

In the role of Tang Lung, Lee plays a naive "country bumpkin" come to a big, crowded, sprawling foreign capital — Rome. He has just arrived and is waiting to be met by the attractive Chen Ching Hua (Nora Miao), who is the niece of an old friend of Tang's. She meets him and her hopes are immediately dashed — how in blazes is this simple, humble peasant supposed to get her out of trouble?

As she drives him into the city, Chen Ching explains that she and her Uncle Wang operate a restaurant on the Via Veneto. For some reason, the Syndicate wants the place and will stop at nothing to get it. Tang tells her not to worry, he'll take care of them. Chen Ching isn't very reassured, but the movie audience sure is!

Shortly, four goons accompanied by a Chinese interpreter (you'll recognize him from THE CHINESE CONNECTION and others) deliver an ultimatum, and follow it up with a return that night — but they're in for a surprise. Tang decides to show them some Chinese boxing. The thugs laugh — but not for long!

Needless to say, Tang Lung becomes the Syndicate's number one target from that point on. Not too much later, a thug waits in Chen Ching's apartment for her and Tang, and orders them at gun point to come along for a visit to the boss. Tang throws a small dart, the thug drops his gun, and then it's all over.

Now the boss really becomes angered, and the whole gang returns *en masse* to the restaurant. Tang takes on all of them, even armed as they are with guns, staffs, knives, and all sorts of masties. From inside the back of his shirt, he pulls twin *nunchakus*. The amazing thing about this whole fight sequence is that none of his opponents are martial artists, yet it is still exciting. The fighting is all very real — no fantasy, exaggeration, or trampoline leaps! And it is no less impressive for the lack of those things — I dare say it's *more* impressive. At length, the syndicate calls in their own martial artists. Tang is lured to a field where he faces the first two real martial arts antagonists in the whole film. The fighting is deadly, ritualistic, brutal, convincing.

Awaiting Tang within the ruins of the ancient Roman Coliseum is the deadly Kuda, played by America's own Chuck Norris (in real life one of the world's greatest practitioners of karate). The film takes a curious turn here. This whole scene is played as... serious art. Pure, unadulterated cinematic art! It's a pity the production values (in lieu of the budget) couldn't have been better here, since it shows — once and for all — that Lee wasn't just another muscle man that stumbled into action movies. It proves he is an actor; yes, you heard me right — a real honest-to-God actor with sensitivities and awarenesses and pure, raw talent! The Coliseum scene is a jigsaw puzzle of allegories, and the power here is positively eerie. Lee achieves an effective, almost Fellini-esque, allegory to death in the presence of a kitten watching the final duel.

And, in another brilliant scene, a thug picks up one of Lee's *nunchakus*. He doesn't know a thing about using it, but tries to copy Lee, and ends up hitting himself on the head. A word to the wise is sufficient!

This film may have a lot more going for it than the distributors realized. Its low budget and dubbing discourage respect, and the veneer of commercial exploitation that accompanies it means it'll be snubbed by most serious filmgoers. Yet I wish it had been done with subtitles, not dubbed. Lee's character, Tang, obviously can't speak or read English (not to mention Italian). While this element has been retained in the dubbed version, the effect is blunted by the fact that everyone, including Lee, is mouthing the same language. The original track had the Chinese speaking Chinese, and the Caucasians speaking English, which at least communicated Tang's problem more effectively. The character Lee plays, with all of his myriad paradoxes, reminds me tremendously of Shintaro Katsu's ZATOICHI. I think it reveals a lot about Bruce Lee — the actor, the martial artist, the man.

As the screen goes dark and the Dragon fades from view in this, his last completed film to be released in America, the aura of Bruce Lee lingers on. He has become a bonafide modern-day film hero, and since RETURN OF THE DRAGON represents quite possibly his final cinematic appearance here in a "new" movie, no martial arts fan should miss it.







FEATURING SUPPORTING CHARACTERS CREATED BY SAX ROHMER  
 Writer: DOUG MOENCH Artists: MIKE VOSBERG, AL MILGROM

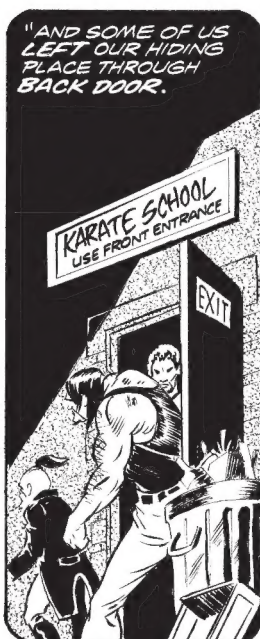








"I GOT LIFE ONLY BECAUSE I AM NOT YOUR FRIEND..."









"IT HAS BEEN A **BAD** NIGHT..."



"...LIKE SO MANY OTHER NIGHTS  
SINCE FACING MY FATHER WITH **TRUTH**."

"BUT IS MY PATH EVER DESTINED  
TO BE BLOCKED BY **CONFLICT**...  
EVEN WHEN THE EVIL MACHINA-  
TIONS OF MY FATHER DO **NOT**  
FOLLOW THE SAME PATH...?"



"FOR, UNTIL MEETING THE MAN  
WHO HAS BEEN TAINTED BY MY  
FATHER'S '**BIOLOGICAL EX-  
PERIMENTS**'..."



"THIS NIGHT HAD BEEN  
**INNOCENT** OF FU MANCHU--"

-- AND YET HAD BEGUN WITH A  
SIMPLE MEAL SHATTERED BY **VIOLENCE**."



AWRIGHT--  
BUT THE PLACE UP  
GOOD!

IF THE OLD CHINK  
CAN'T **PAY** FOR PRO-  
TECTION, THEN HE  
AIN'T GONNA **GET**  
NO PROTECTION--!!

GHEESH!

**STOP!** WHAT DO  
YOU THINK YOU'RE  
DOING--?!



TEACHIN' YOU A **LESSON**,  
CHINAMAN-- ONE YOU WON'T  
**FORGET** THE NEXT TIME  
WE COME COLLECTIN'  
**BILLS**--!!



SWAK

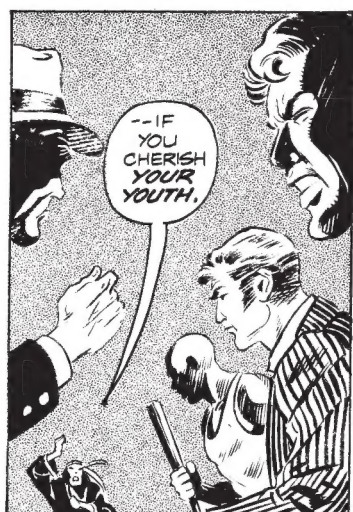
STOP.

THIS MAN  
IS **OLD**...



YOU WILL  
NOT STRIKE  
HIM **AGAIN**--

--IF  
YOU  
CHERISH  
YOUR  
YOUTH.









THE VOICE OF *HELPLESSNESS* IS THAT OF A *CHILD* CRYING FOR *AID*... BECAUSE HE HAS NOT YET LEARNED TO *AID HIMSELF*. BUT THE LANGUAGE OF *DESPAIR* IS TOO *COMPLICATED* FOR A *CHILD*... AND IS THEREFORE RESERVED FOR THE MAN WHO HAS *GROWN* WITHOUT *LEARNING*...

MR. BOSS OWNS THIS TOWN--AND HE RUNS IT SO *SMOOTHLY* THAT NOT EVEN THE *POLICE* CAN FIND A *ROUGH* EDGE TO *GRAB ONTO*--!

JUST *THIS AFTER-NOON* I LEARNED THAT HE'S HAVING A *BIRTH-DAY PARTY* AT THE *BAG'S END*-- THE BIGGEST AND MOST *CONSPICUOUS* NIGHT CLUB IN THE *CITY*. IT WAS A *COP* WHO TOLD ME ABOUT IT. YOU SEE, THEY *KNOW* WHERE HE IS-- EVERY MINUTE OF THE *DAY*. BUT THEY CAN'T *PROVE* ANYTHING --CAN'T CATCH HIM *RED-HANDED*!

AND SO HE GOES ABOUT HIS BUSINESS IN THE *OPEN*--- CELEBRATING HIS *BIRTHDAY* WHILE THE *CITY BLEEDS* AT HIS *COMMAND*! WHAT CAN THE *POLICE* DO? WHAT CAN *I* DO?

AND EVEN *YOU*, MY FOOLISH FRIEND... WHAT CAN *YOU* DO...?

WHATEVER I... *MUST*.

"THUS, I HAVE NOT *HEEDED* THE VOICE OF *DESPAIR*...



"FOR I AM NOT YET READY TO *LEAVE* THE STREETS OF THIS *CITY*.



THERE IS STILL MUCH TO *LEARN* HERE...

"...EVEN IF KNOWLEDGE IS *UNIVERSAL*...



"...AND CHANGES *LITTLE* FROM ONE PLACE TO *ANOTHER*.

"THE LESSON I *LEARN NOW*--



"...IS ONE WITH WHICH THE OLD MAN IS *ALREADY FAMILIAR*...



"A GLINT OF *DEATH* FROM THE RAPIDLY *APPROACHING* *AUTO-MOBILE*...

"*DEATH* WOULD *SPEAK* TO ME, IN *BURSTS* OF *LOUD NOISE*...



"...AND *BLUE SPARKS* CHIPPING FROM THE *GROUND* AT MY *FEET*."

I DO NOT *LISTEN* TO THE *NOISE*... AS I *LEAP* OVER THE *SPARKS*.





IF THE OLD MAN  
IS FAMILIAR WITH  
THIS LESSON OF  
DEATH...



"...THEN HE HAS  
GROWN AROUND IT..."



"...AND IN HIS AVOIDANCE  
OF IT, HAS LEARNED NOTHING."

I HAVE TRAINED  
HIM WELL,  
DUCCHARME...

HE HAS  
PREVAILED  
UNDER A  
BURDEN OF  
CONSIDERABLE  
STRIFE.



MIGHT IT NOT PROVE  
**INTERESTING** WERE I TO  
**INCREASE** THAT BURDEN...?

IF NOTHING ELSE,  
IT WOULD SERVE  
TO ELIMINATE THE  
NUISANCE OF THE  
FREAKS WHO HAVE  
ALREADY DEFIED  
MY WILL **ONCE**.



WHAT IS YOUR **WISH**, O'  
CELESTIAL ONE ?

THE GIRL WHO IS  
PRESENTLY BEING INSTRUCTED  
IN THE ARTS OF THE **CONCUBINE**...

SHE MAY **BETTER**  
SERVE ME IN A  
**DIFFERENT**  
CAPACITY.



GO TO HER,  
DUCCHARME.

...AND CONDUCT  
HER TO...MY  
**LABORATORY**.









BUT HOW MAY YOU TAKE **LIFE** AND SHAPE IT INTO A LIVING VERSION OF THAT WHICH IS ALREADY **DEAD**? IS DEATH NOT THE END TO **ALL** THINGS?

ONLY WHEN IT IS NOT THE **BEGINNING**, DU-CHARME. MY POWER WAS **BORN** IN DEATH, AND **GROWS** WITH EACH DEATH I BRING TO ANOTHER **ENEMY**.



BESIDES, A CREATION OF FU MANCHU MAY **NEVER** DIE, AS LONG AS DEATH IS MINE TO **COMMAND**...

...AND AS LONG AS I POSSESS THE POWER TO **RECREATE** THAT WHICH I HAVE COMMANDED TO **DIE**.

"THE NIGHT HAS GROWN WORSE..."



...WITH EACH STREET I HAVE **CROSSED**



...EACH ALLEY I HAVE **ENTERED**...



"...EACH MAN I HAVE **MET**..."



"...AND EACH MOMENT WHICH HAS **PASSED**."

"I AM STILL SAD, THEN, IN THIS NIGHT."



FIVE MEN?!  
FIVE?!?

LISTEN, YOU INCOMPETENT **JERKS**--I **RULE** THIS CITY AND I **RULE** IT **GOOD**, FROM THE TOP OF ITS **SKYSCRAPERS** TO THE BOTTOM OF ITS **GUTTERS**!!

I **AIN'T** GONNA HAVE THAT **RULE** **THREATENED** BY SOME WETNOSED **PUNK**! YOU'RE GONNA **KILL** HIM AND YOU'RE GONNA **KILL** HIM **FAST**--EVEN IF YOU HAVE TO CLIMB OVER EVERY **SKYSCRAPER** AND CRAWL THROUGH EVERY **GUTTER** FROM HERE ALL THE WAY TO **NEW YORK**! NOW **GET OUT**!!

Y-YES, MR. BOSS....



"BREATHING... BEHIND ME--"

SHANG-CHI!





NO NEED TO SHOW OFF YOUR DEFENSE STANCE, SHANG-CHI...

I DON'T NEED TO BE IMPRESSED.

BUT...YOU WERE IN THE BUILDING--

THERE WAS AN ARGUMENT. SEVERAL MEMBERS OF OUR ENCLAVE DID NOT BELIEVE YOU'D KEEP OUR TRUST. THEY PURSUED YOU. I PURSUED THEM.

I'D JUST ABOUT REACHED THE BACK DOOR WHEN THE EXPLOSION BLEW IT OFF ITS HINGES...

...AND ME RIGHT THROUGH THE OPENING.

--WHEN THE EXPLOSION OCCURRED...?

NO...NOT QUITE.

WHY HAVE YOU COME TO ME NOW? DO YOU BELIEVE--AS THE OTHERS-- THAT THE EXPLOSION WAS CAUSED BY MY HAND?

WHEN LAST WE MET, SHANG-CHI, I SAID I BELIEVED IN YOU. I STILL DO. I'VE COME ONLY TO WARN YOU THAT THE OTHERS ARE HUNTING...

YOU HAVE SPOKEN THE SAME WORDS IN THE PAST-- FALSELY. I HAVE LEARNED TO RECOGNIZE A JUDAS GOAT!

THERE IS SOMETHING I MUST...DO...FIRST.

BUT THEY KNOW I'VE COME TO WARN YOU, AND NOW HUNT ME AS WELL. SO IN RETURN FOR MY WARNING...

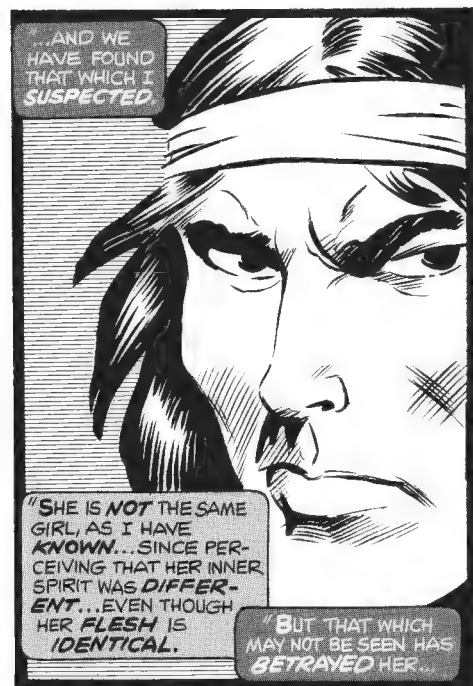
... I MUST ASK THAT YOU ESCORT ME TO MY NEW FRIENDS.

WHEN LAST WE MET, YOU SAID THAT YOU BELIEVED IN ME. HAVE YOU LOST YOUR BELIEF...?

WAIT HERE.



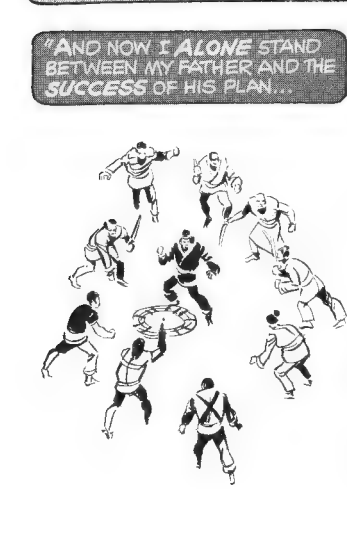
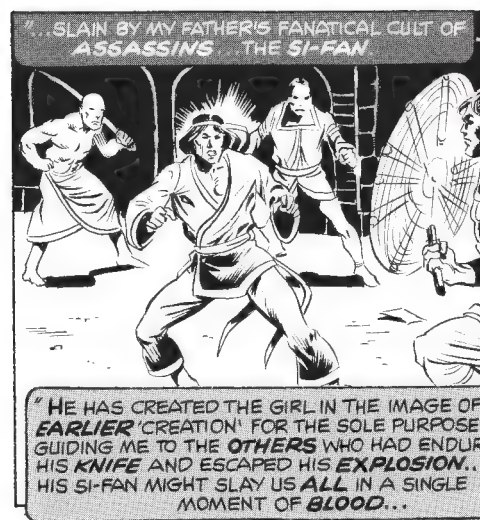
















"THE SUCCESS  
OF MY PLAN  
FORCES ME TO  
FLEE..."

AFTER  
HIM--!!



...BUT I MUST ENSURE THAT  
MY PATH OF FLIGHT IS A  
REGULATED ONE...



THUS, WHEN THE SI-FAN FALL  
BEHIND, I MUST SLOW MY  
RUN...

...UNTIL THEY DECREASE  
THE DISTANCE BETWEEN  
US TO THAT WHICH IS  
SLIGHTLY BEYOND THE  
RANGE OF THEIR  
WEAPONS



NOW I MAY EXERT  
MY FULL STRENGTH,  
FOR IT IS IMPORTANT  
ONLY THAT I REMAIN  
WITHIN THEIR SIGHT.

WHERE DO  
YOU THINK  
YOU'RE  
RUNNIN' TO,  
KID?



THIS IS A  
PRIVATE  
PARTY.

ENTRANCE BY  
INVITATION  
ONLY.

SO YOU CAN  
JUST--



OOFFF!!





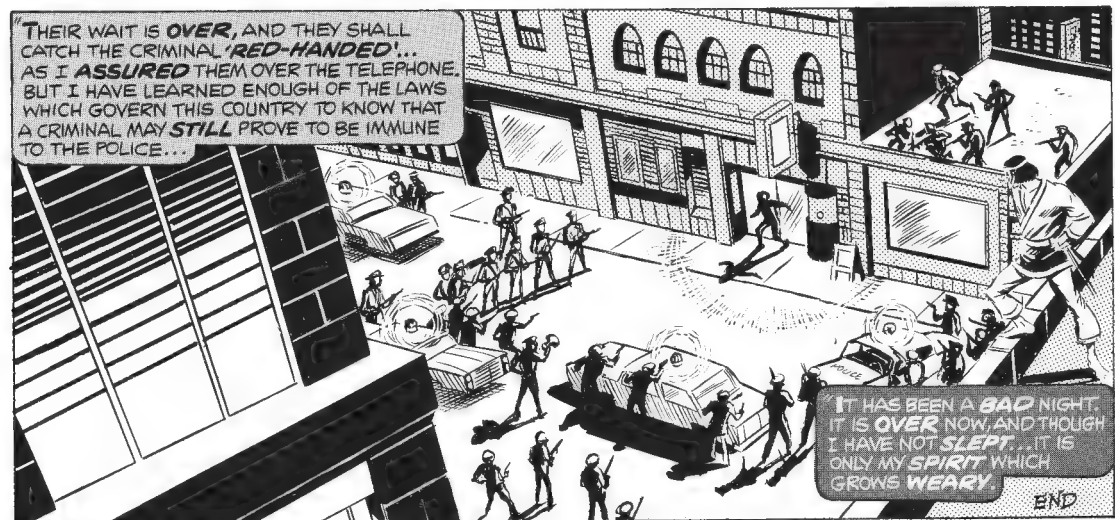


"I HAVE TURNED AWAY FROM THE *SPIRIT* OF MY FATHER'S TEACHINGS, AND YET I HAVE OFTEN RELIED UPON THE *ESSENCE* OF HIS IMPARTED *KNOWLEDGE* ...FOR A TOOL WHICH HAS BEEN *MISUSED* IS NOT IN ITSELF *EVIL*."

"THIS, JUST AS MY FATHER USED THE GIRL TO LURE ME INTO BATTLE WITH *OTHERS* WHO WERE HIS ENEMIES, I HAVE USED *MYSELF* TO LURE THE *SI-FAN* INTO BATTLE WITH THESE *CRIMINALS*."











Dear Tony & Co.,

**THE DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU** is going to become the vehicle that will introduce a whole new readership into the world of Marvel comics and magazines. A large amount of people who, ordinarily, would never pick up a comic mag or horror book, are buying this publication regularly, which just might serve to make it the most important black-and-white you now have out. Thus, I'm overjoyed about your putting a Marvel Checklist in this title as well as the other magazines, and I hope they prove an irresistible lure to a new audience of fledgling Marvel madmen.

With this magazine now monthly (and by the way, congratulations sincerely offered to everyone concerned) and Shang-Chi's own book the same, plus a **GIANT-SIZE MASTER OF KUNG FU**, the son of Fu Manchu will be making twenty-eight separate appearances a year. Since I like the character, this is fine by me, but I do feel it's time for Shang to become more involved with other characters and menaces outside the evil influence of his father. This issue's Shang-Chi tale was fine. Doug Moench turned in an excellent script as always, and I like his constant use of the intermeshing of characters to convey something beyond the mere story itself. It always takes me several readings of Doug's Shang-Chi endeavors to catch some of the more important ideas embodied in them. Ironically, Fu Manchu was the ultimate victor this time, because he forced Shang's hand into killing a man he's sworn not to destroy, thus mentally demoralizing our Martial Arts expert. Mike Vosburg looks as if he'll handle this strip with all the aplomb possible a newcomer, and I look forward to his work here in the future.

Don McGregor's third part of his review of "Enter the Dragon" had as fine a build-up as the movie itself. I, too, was curious as to why it was seen fit to dispose of Williams so suddenly, midway into the movie. And I must admit to being a bit upset myself that Bruce Lee was not the one to battle it out with Bolo. Somehow, you just wanted to see him flatten everyone, which he pretty nearly did. Don's observation on the action-reaction principle in Martial Arts viewing made quite a bit of sense, and it's something I hadn't thought about until he mentioned it. Something I have thought about, however, is the future of Martial Arts films, and to me, it looks pretty dismal. I think Don hit it right on the head when he stated "one wonders what Lee

would have devised to lure back that mass audience which can so quickly become jaded. Unfortunately, we'll never know." Well, fortunately, or unfortunately, we will know, because even as I'm writing this, it's just a few short hours until I'll be going to see the new Bruce Lee picture, "Return of the Dragon." I had heard Bruce was working on another flick at the time of his death, but it's news to me, as I think it is to everyone, that it was completed before he died. Yet, despite the fact that Bruce Lee is now practically a myth figure in the Martial Arts cinema, somehow the excitement isn't there as it was when "Enter the Dragon" made its debut over here. I've no doubts that Lee intended "Enter" to be merely a starting point for a whole series of Martial Arts extravaganzas, each more spectacular than the previous one. But in terms of audience response, "Enter the Dragon" was the peak, because it came at the right moment with the right star. Had Lee lived, each succeeding film would have had less and less of an impact on the "jaded public." I can sense that "Return of the Dragon" will have nowhere near the lines to see it that its predecessor had. What I'm trying to say, is that regardless of whether or not Bruce Lee had lived or died, the Martial Arts flick is to all intents and purposes, dead. Happily, Don McGregor is nowhere near being such, and so I'm eagerly awaiting his review of the sequel to Bruce Lee's "last" film, and his opinions on where the Kung Fu movie goes from here.

J. David Warner wrote a fairly penetrating study of the "Kung Fu" television show, "Kung Fu Revisited." I was especially intrigued by John's observation concerning the character development of Caine by Carradine. Yes, I have noticed a bit more cynicism in Kwai Chang of late, but it's been subtle, as in keeping with the show. Although the two-parter this season was not my favorite show, I found something in it which I've found lacking (purposely or not) in most of the episodes, humor. Contrary to his usual posture of staunch stoicism mixed with a little naïveté, Carradine played Caine (except in the flashback sequences) as very hip to the absurdity of what was going on around him, and all in all, it came off extremely well. I'm still amazed at how this show has captured the American public's imagination, when its star is neither Chinese, nor a Martial Artist.

The big letdown this issue, as, for me, it's been every issue, is the "Sons of the Tiger." I realize that

this issue had an emergency fill-in on the art, so I can't be too harsh there, but Gerry's explanation about there really being a conspiracy to destroy American youth through drugs, masterminded by the Silent Ones, was awfully corny. As characters, I find them lacking in substance, and they seem stereotypes of stereo types. I hope some changes are made soon, because the more I see of them, the more I'm anxious for you to find a replacement for them.

Shang-Chi should be in every issue because he's a major reason people buy this book, as witnessed by the "Readers' Polls." Artistically, I would enjoy seeing Shang given a vacation now and then, because except for Dracula, we're now seeing more of him than any other Marvel character. I think that with the Kung Fu movie craze on its' last kick, and especially with so many of them being so poorly done, I'm not in favor of any more movie reviews unless it's a spectacular outing. I do feel it's time for some features on the real-life Martial Artists, people like Joe Lewis and Chuck Norris, what styles they prefer, what they think of kung fu flicks, etc. Of course, in tandem with this, increased coverage of all types of martial arts tournaments would be most welcome, as I truly enjoyed your coverage of one in the Special Edition of **Deadly Hands of Kung Fu**. And I'm anxious as ever for you to begin running articles giving in-depth studies of the Martial Arts themselves; everything from savate to samurai swordplay. If you do decide to run future articles on Bruce Lee, my wish is that they be primarily concerned with the system of self-defense which Lee claims is martial artistry without the ritual, Jeet Kune Do.

**Ralph Macchio**  
188 Wilson Drive  
Cresskill, NJ 07626

We graciously accept your astute observations, Mr. Macchio, for you have honored us beyond our humble expectations. The philosophical ramifications of your pronouncements have, indeed, coaxed venerable Doug Moench (who used to be Devil-May-Care until he began scripting Gabriel's weird misadventures in **HAUNT OF HORROR**) from the sacred pentagrams that nowadays protect his person. Doug stayed outside the perimeter of his jasmine scented candles just long enough to murmur these inscrutable words. "What has gone before is as nothing as nothing is to something." With such venerable wisdom as that gracing these pages, it's no wonder Shang-Chi has become the darling of underdogs everywhere.

As for Don McGregor, you've no doubt seen that the Dauntless One has indeed bombarded you with his endless observations on **WAY OF THE DRAGON**, which, if you are paying attention, informs you that this movie was made before **ENTER**, and not after. So, his original statement still stands.

At least until next week. After that, it's anybody's ballgame.

As for the Sons of the Tiger, we think you'll note some improvements in the series this time; and both Marv Wolfman and Don have been talking to beautiful Bill Mantlo about our threesome. Bill has begun to explore some of the personalities of the Sons of the Tiger in this issue's story, and promises that there'll be even more revelations in the upcoming episodes. The Silent Ones will be less silent in the future, and their fate is rapidly approaching—a fate you won't want to miss. A fate that you don't dare miss!

At least that's what Bill told us when asking for a raise. And who are we to doubt him?

Dear Sir:

I am writing in regards to your editorial asking what your fans would like to see covered by your magazine. So far I found your past issues to be pertinent and well written concerning the Martial

## READERS' FORUM

This forum was established to print letters that echo the sentiments or requests of many of our readers, that will give special attention to controversial directions for **THE DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU**. So get into your favorite *gr* and let your wisdom flow through the mail system (eratic as it may be) to these hallowed offices. We will await your missives with inscrutable aplomb.

Dear Marvel,

You should make Bruce Lee as a star in his own comic book. It would be great.

**Mark McCray**  
(No Adress Given)

For all you who have requested such a feature, we have to tell you that it isn't all that easy. Bruce Lee is not an imaginary character. One can't, say, do a strip on a television series without there being contracts, and many lawyers, involved. That takes a great deal of time. Also, the members of Bruce Lee's family have been through a tragedy and without sounding trite, are facing a great loss in their lives. While we've mentioned elsewhere that we have tried to feature articles on Bruce—since he has inspired such a loyal following—we hope that we have done so with dignity and grace.

And if the opportunity should e'er arise when a strip could be done with permission, and with the grace and dignity mentioned above, we'd certainly take it into consideration.

We think all of you, who loved the characters Bruce created for your enjoyment, can understand that, and wouldn't want it any other way.

Arts. I especially enjoyed the articles on Mr. Bruce Lee (The Dragon Has Entered, Heroes Don't Die, and my favorite, Lee's Life) and would greatly appreciate more articles and pictures on the late Mr. Lee. I think information about his early life and perhaps more on his personal philosophy, together with more original pictures (as you have done before), would be of much interest to his many admirers.

My second favorite section is the movie review. I enjoy reading about the different Martial Arts movies that are now being released. I think it would contribute to the interest of your magazine to have more articles on the Oriental stars of these movies (the articles on Barry Chan and Angela Moa-Ying were very good). I would especially like to see an article and some pictures on Yoa Tien-Loung, who starred in the movie "The Bamboo Brotherhood." He is a fantastic Martial Artist who reminds me very much of Bruce Lee. I believe he is the same person whom you described in the movie "Infernal Street." He is a much better choice to succeed Mr. Lee (no one will replace him) than Barry Chan.

Now as to what I would like to see less of in your magazine. The articles on David Carradine could be cut in two and the space utilized for someone or something more appropriate to the Martial Arts. I also think there are enough comic strips and to add any more would make the magazine nothing but a thick comic book. You have integrated the articles and the comic strips into an interesting well-balanced magazine with something for everyone. Thank you for letting me voice my opinion.

**Marsha Gabor**  
2560 Nesbitt Ave.  
Akron, OH 44314

That's what these letters pages are for, Marsha. No need to thank us.

We'll be featuring more articles on the late Mr. Lee, since he was one of the principal performers that brought the Kung Fu medium into the popular consciousness. Also, from the many letters we've received, it seems that a majority of you want to see a diversity of subjects concerning the master of *jeet kune do*, and we're going to do our best to fulfill that request.

We've run articles on other Martial Arts stars and will continue to do so, but we certainly haven't decided to ignore the Kung Fu television series—while you may have become disenchanted with the series, it still has many ardent followers, and we want to do some articles on David Carradine, examining both the strong points and the faults of various individual episodes that comprise the series.

And no, Gang, not all of our articles will be favorable, whether they are about Bruce Lee's films, or the Kung Fu Television program, or any other subject that comes under our scrutiny. They will be the honest opinions of the individuals who write these incisive pieces.

You may disagree with a particular writer. You may hate his viewpoint. But you'll know it wasn't all mindless hype, and we think you'll discover facts behind the scenes that you were never aware of before.

We're most concerned that the articles be interesting and informative, and that this be the only place in town where you'll get such in-depth coverage of the Martial Arts scene. We'll try to maintain that distinction, and we know you'll let us know if we don't.



## READERS' POLL

Before Warrior and venerable Ancient One collide in cataclysmic fury, we just have time enough to tell you the results of the Readers' Poll for **DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU** #4.

- (1) "Circle of Serpent's Blood," by Doug Moench, Mike Vosburg and Al Milgrom—Shang goes West, but Fu Manchu doesn't say "Heigh Yo, Silver!" tied with: "The Dragon Has Entered," (part three) by Don McGregor—our mammoth filmbook concluded.
- (2) "Night of the Death-Dream," by Gerry Conway, Don Perlin and Dan Adkins. The Sons of the Tiger have fallen on hard times, trailed only by...
- (3) "Kung Fu Revisited," by J. David Warner and Frank McLaughlin. Is somebody trying to tell us they don't find favor with the wandering Caine?

"Even as thou speaketh, Mystic Mage, mine eyes perceive thy fear." "Then your eyes perceive visions and not reality, Esteemed Opponent." There's a readers' poll for this very issue your holding, and if it doesn't self-destruct by the end of this column, why don't you send in your entry, and let us know what features were your favorites?

Don't be afraid of warriors born or venerable ancient ones, just send to:

**THE DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU**  
Marvel Comics Group  
575 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10022



Marvel,

Shang-Chi's stories seem to grow better with each issue. I consider "Web of Bleeding Vipers!" from ish #3 to be the best so far, followed by "Experiments In Horror" from ish #2; but "Circle of Serpent's Blood!" isn't far behind.

Tell Doug to keep up the good work.

Your three part "The Dragon Has Entered" has been your best article followed by "Fu Manchu, Sax Rohmer, and Shang-Chi."

**Daniel A. Conway**  
1201 Baker Ave.  
Knoxville, TN 37920

If you liked "Experiments in Horror," Mr. C., you must've been turned on by Doug's sequel to that Shang-Chi opus. And if you think Doug's hint at an ultimate confrontation between father and son is in the foreseeable future, well who are we to say thee nay?

Oooops! Wrong book! "Get thee back, Knave!" "Honorable Warrior speak when silence would convey wisdom." "Insolent Varlet, how darrest thou speakst thus to a Warrior-born!?" "The heavens laugh at a warrior's destiny."

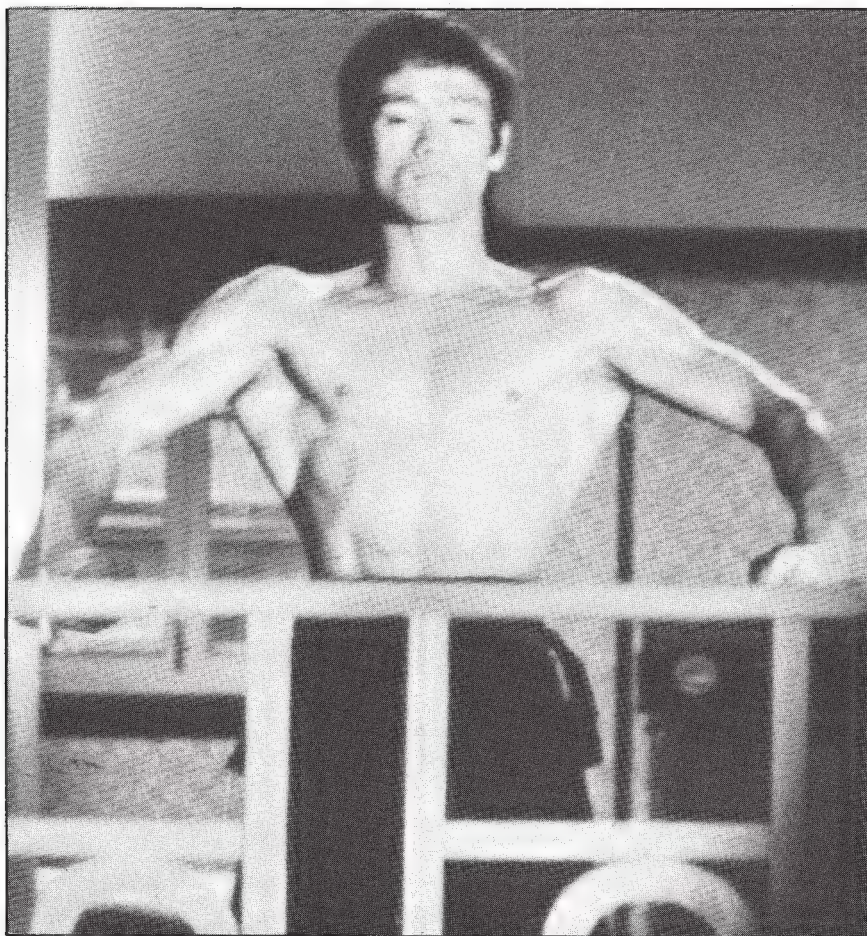
Sheesh, but it's terrible what happens when two different letters pages collide in mid-stream.

Hey, Doug, is there any room inside that Pentagon?



# THE WAY OF THE DRAGON VS. THE MASS- SELL MENACE!!

by Don McGregor





Newspaper ads proclaim that the Dragon has returned.

Television announcers inform us in sombre tones that Bruce Lee is back and add, "Boy, do we need him now!"

The chronicling of adventures concerning the quiet, soft-spoken hero of *ENTER THE DRAGON* is reported to have its second installment. The Kung Fu genre will not die. It will not fade out!

So much for ad hype.

As most readers of *THE DEADLY HANDS OF KUNG FU* probably know, *WAY OF THE DRAGON*, subtitled here in the States as Bruce Lee's last film, was actually made *before* *ENTER THE DRAGON*. The Bruce Lee phenomena had not yet swept America, although his success in Hong Kong was already a fact and Lee had just finished making *THE CHINESE CONNECTION*.

*RETURN OF THE DRAGON* was never intended for United States release; in fact, its original title had nothing to do with a return, since the Dragon had not yet made his first appearance. Since Lee himself named this film *WAY OF THE DRAGON*, I think it appropriate to refer to it by that title. Bruce Lee scripted and directed the film—a bold move for one who had completed only two major movies on the Hong Kong circuit—and he

realized that it lacked the sophistication that Western audiences demanded.

Yet, one cannot fault the fight sequences. They are as superb as any of the battles fought in Lee's earlier films; in fact, with the use of the Roman Coliseum for the climactic gladiatorial combat against Chuck Norris, there is a sustained, ritualistic ferocity that is missing from the earlier Bruce Lee imports. As the battle scenes in *ENTER THE DRAGON* were touched with the charismatic movements of the incredibly fluid Bruce Lee, so are the displays of Chinese boxing (as it is referred to in *WAY OF THE DRAGON*) the most effective moments in Bruce Lee's first and only venture as the controlling artist in the making of one of his films.

*WAY OF THE DRAGON* is not Bruce Lee's last film. If the Dragon (as he has become known) had lived, it is doubtful that it would ever have been marketed here; or if it had, at least we might've heard Bruce Lee's voice on the soundtrack.

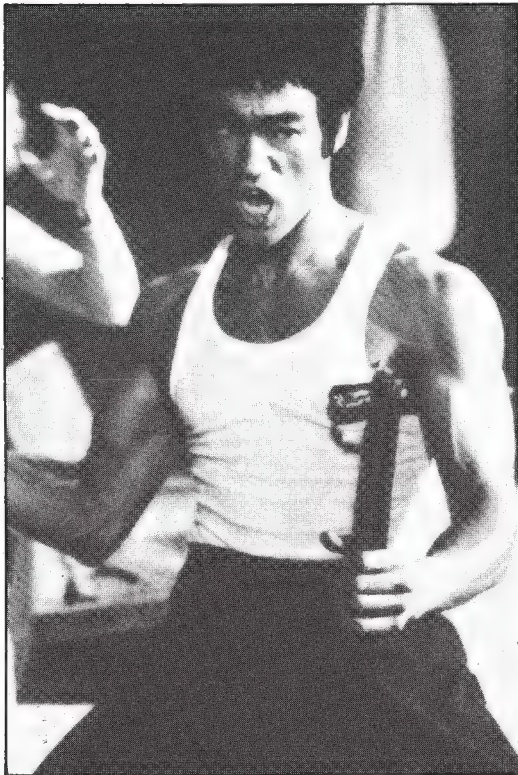
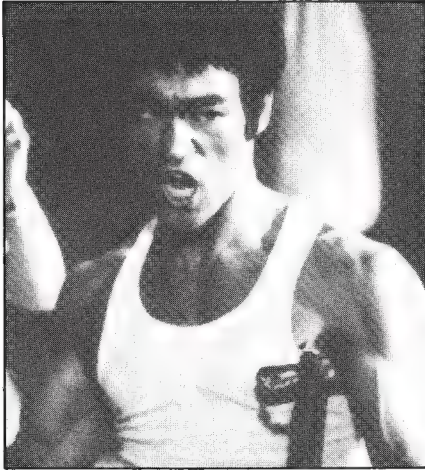
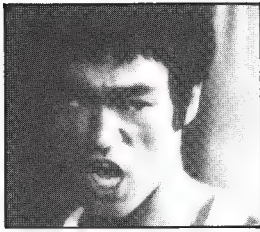
There is a scarcity of real product concerning Bruce. All three of his major films have made the rounds throughout the year. Loyal followers attending for the seventeenth time are still not enough to keep the same three films running endlessly.

The dragon was subverted.

It is not a completely insidious battle—Bruce Lee's







many fans are at least able to see the man in action once again, performing in his inimitable style, utilizing, as in his later film, the *nunchakus*. No, please don't bother standing up and screaming that in this film the difference is that he uses two of the weapons rather than just one. We are aware of that, friends, and yes—taken by itself—it is a remarkable display.

It is the ad-sell attitude that is disturbing, and the fact that, since the film embodies a naivete of humor that the distributors felt would bore American audiences (it probably would), we do not see the finished print that was distributed in Hong Kong. The worst aspect of *WAY OF THE DRAGON*, certainly more condemnable than either the mutilation of Bruce Lee's directorial capacities or even the vaguely bad tasting after-effect of the commercials, is that the dubbing is so hollow and flat that it robs Lee's script of any spontaneity it might have had. Any subtleties of characterization were lost in the sound studios.

Not only isn't Lee the same character he portrayed in *ENTER THE DRAGON*, but he doesn't even *sound* like Bruce Lee. The slight, sardonic tone is missing. The quietly amused observations have turned sterile. The lips move, but the voice is unaware of this. The words match the lips somewhat, yet the life has been stolen from them. No wonder the humor fails so miserably. And since nearly the first half hour of *WAY OF THE DRAGON* is composed of dialogue scenes, the film is seriously damaged by such inept, unemotional dubbed-in voices, translating the script into English.

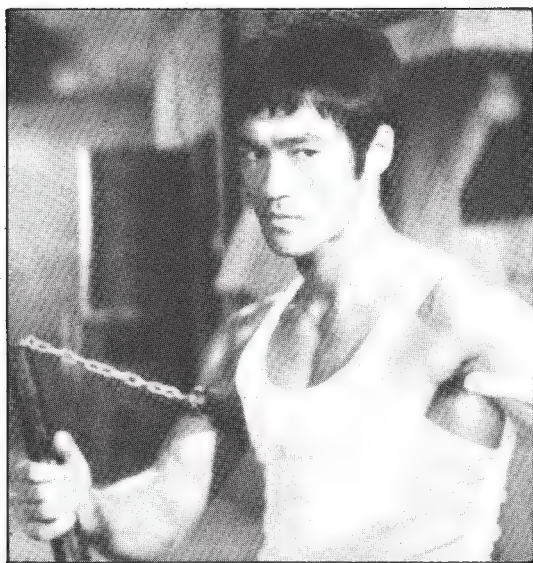
The character Lee plays in *WAY OF THE DRAGON* is called Tang Lung, which means China Dragon. Presumably, this is why the picture uses the familiar Dragon word in its title, but American audiences unfamiliar with the translation of Tang Lung are never informed of that fact. It bespeaks of Lee's profound image that an explanation is not needed. One knows and thinks of Lee as the Dragon. Some of that is due to the massive ad campaign and the exhaustive material that magazines have used in attempts to give their readers more information on the life and attitudes of the late Martial Arts star.

Tang Lung has journeyed to Rome to aid a family friend, Chen Ching Hua, who has been threatened by local hoods who are never given a group identity. It seems Rome as well as New York has numerous big bosses and Mafia Dons infiltrating their deadly ways into the fabric of everyday life. Chen spars verbally with Lee, and the dubbing effects take their deadly toll, but Lee does have a wry smile and an impish quality that transcends the soundtrack.

Chen owns a restaurant, a small affair that hardly seems all the bother that this big crime organization devotes to it. Perhaps it is a matter of pride that forces them to continue with their threats and assassination attempts once Lee makes the proceedings a bit rougher than they have been. At any rate, the Boss (played by Jon T. Benn) wants Chen's restaurants and frightens away any customers that might innocently wander into the establishment. Mr. Big has a vast assortment of criminal types at his command, and they have nothing better to do than trot over to this restaurant, night after night, speaking in sinister tones which become absurd parodies of threats thanks to the atrociously-dubbed accents.

Let's hear it for the sound studio again, Gang!





Chen is convinced that Tang Lung—or Lee—will be of little aid in her battle for goodness and purity and honest Oriental food in the midst of Rome. Hers is the good cause, but Lee is from the old country, unused to the ways of city. And therefore, without any street savvy, what can he possibly hope to accomplish?

Plenty!

And he does.

Anyone who knows Bruce Lee, or has glimpsed one Kung Fu film, is well aware of that fact.

It is difficult to completely assess Lee's directorial ability, from the version of the film released here in the States. These opening scenes establish Lee as Tang Lung and Nora Miao as Chen Ching Hua, taking them from the Rome airport to Chen's apartment, where they continue their perusal of one another. There is an uneven effect about these scenes, and the confrontations in dialogue, if literally translated, fail to delve beneath the surface of any of the characters.

While it has been over a month since I've seen the film, I recall thinking at the time that the confidence Lee displays in handling the battle scenes is lost when the action ceases. The scenes static, as if Lee himself had been waiting to get back to more familiar territory.

It is probably sheer suicide to make such negative remarks about a Bruce Lee film in this magazine—the multitudes will swarm about the offices, and irate letters will pour across our desks demanding a retraction; but it must be remembered that all good critiques seek to communicate an individual expression.

A second interjection at this point might also be necessary: A few negative remarks do not necessarily condemn the whole or fail to recognize the talent and artistry that Lee held.

As a Martial Arts master and as an action performer, bringing excitement and dynamic stuntwork back onto the screens, Lee had few peers. His hopes had been to rise above the genre he worked in, to make movies that were more than senseless blood battles for vicarious violence viewers who get their thrills from seeing slashed bodies.

It is possible that if he had lived, Lee might have succeeded. There have certainly been worse cinematic first efforts, and such things as budget, deadlines, and clinical dubbing techniques can all hamper the final product that a viewer sees on the screen. This is not a defensive tactic for Lee—he made his own defenses, and quite legitimately, as to his purposes. *WAY OF THE DRAGON* was a training film... the chance to begin forming his own product.

Lee did have a sense of pacing, and though it is never completely mastered in *WAY OF THE DRAGON*, that knowledge is evident. He builds a credible aura of audience anticipation; before Tang Lung whirls his first *nunchaku* or throws his first dart, the audience is waiting for him to take action. And Lee, wisely has several false starts before the actual battles begin.

Most of the battles during the first half of the film occur in a dead end alleyway right outside the restaurant. They are minor battles as far as Bruce Lee's choreographed Martial Arts performances are concerned, with the exception of the final fight where Lee skillfully takes out numerous opponents with *nunchakus*. One of the







villains tries his hand at swinging the *nunchaku*, only to end up belting himself in the face with the weapon. It is one of the few humorous moments in the movie that works, probably because it is not dependent on the ill-recorded voice-over facilities.

Linda Lee, Bruce's wife, states that he thought about reconsidering distribution rights for *WAY OF THE DRAGON* before his death, although it is uncertain if he had control over the final edited print. She does state that Lee hadn't decided, if he did release the film to Western audiences, whether he should dub the soundtrack or use subtitles. Obviously, for the audience and the distributors, the translated version makes much more sense; it's just unfortunate that they didn't put more care into the taping and choice of voice actors for the roles.

As the movie progresses, Tang Lung finally invades the fortress of the Boss (he's never called anything else—just "the Boss"—and he looks like a reject from a 1940's Grade Z movie). His right-hand man, because almost all big bosses have right-hand men, is displayed as having homosexual tendencies, smiling coyly, wilting his hand—all the overused and cliché images that malign a serious subject with offhanded, often callous humor. The caricature is spawned full-grown upon the screen, conceived in bar room jokes from the uneducated minds of macho freaks just vaguely afraid of their own masculinity.

The Boss has kidnapped Chen, and the Boss' right hand man (whose name I've forgotten) tells her that she ought to sign her restaurant over to them. She refuses,

and he informs her that severe steps might have to be taken; we never find out what these are, since Tang Lung appears with the crew of restaurant waiters who have also been studying fighting techniques. This is one of the most awkward fights that Lee ever put on film, and much of it is due to the fact that the fight does not concentrate on his prowess.

Anyway, Chen is rescued. Lee stands up to the Boss and tells him to lay off. The fact that he's done the same thing back at the restaurant during the last fight is lost—if the Boss didn't listen that time, there appears to be little reason he'll do so this time. But Lee gives him a stern hero's look, while I wondered why he didn't just haul off and knock him clear across the room.

Now let's think about this. Here are all these underpaid, illiterate hoods who work for the Boss. Lee batters them about, kicks them, slams them, humiliates them, and in general does things that aren't any good for their health!

No one will deny that.

But the man who has instigated all this antagonism he lets off with a warning, then he steps over the bodies of the fallen henchmen and departs with a triumphant stride.

The Boss is not pleased.

Did Lee think he would be?

The Boss tells his aide that he wants results, as Bosses have a wont to want. And so they call in Martial Arts specialists. Of course, no one is quite the specialist that



Lee is in cinematic mayhem. The Boss recruits Bob Wall and Ch'eng Pin Chih to face Lee.

And one other.

Kuda!

Kuda is played by Chuck Norris, who is the acknowledged Professional World Karate Champion. His real name is Carlos Ray Norris; he was born in 1940, and at 34 years of age he has won more Martial Arts Awards than any other challenger. Not a man to be trifled with.

While none of the three hired assassins have any background, they are all visually more distinctive than the Boss' other payroll thugs.

On New Year's Eve, the prancing right-hand *aide-de-camp* appears at the restaurant with an offer. The Boss is willing to call off all animosities if only the restaurant men and Tang Lung will meet them on the morrow at a prearranged site.

They all agree, which is curious in itself. Bruce—as Tang—has already given his ultimatum, and it is never

A few broken lips, gouged gums and splintered noses is a deterrent that even the power of positive thinking has a tough time overcoming.

But what the hell.

They go, and they aren't suspicious—and I admit, in the end analysis, as in so many shows of this type, it's better that they did. Sometimes the end does justify the means, though one simply wishes that the plot mechanics were not so motivationless.

Bob Wall and Huang Jen Chih appear out of the surrounding woodland as soon as the cars have parked, and the occupants have disembarked. About that time, our gullible protagonists come to realize that they have been had.

The don't shout, "We should have known!"—but I had the feeling it belonged in there, anyhow. Being the true stalwarts that they are, none of the waiters turn to their escorts and plead to get the hell out of there; I'm beginning to think none of them had enough sense to do

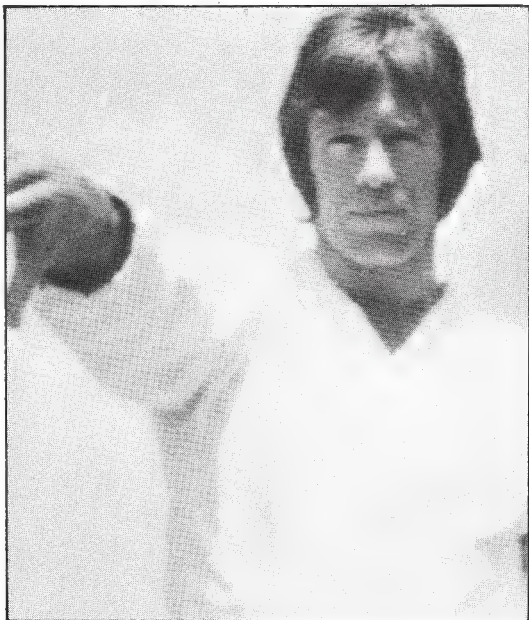


quite clear as to what bargaining power the Boss has that would make any of them feel they had to keep such a meeting.

Chen's Uncle (played by Huang Chung Hsun) has warned them against fighting the minions of the Boss before each new encounter, but when the restaurant waiters and Lee are driven to the meeting site, Uncle Wang goes along with them.

I must admit that the absurdity of events reminded me of those early-day serials where the pure and virginal hero walks blithely into deadly trap after deadly trap without learning his lesson. But when you're Bruce Lee, you don't have to worry about learning lessons—you teach them!

Still, it strains whatever shred of credibility the plotline has left that neither Bruce nor his companions become suspicious once they are chauffeured out into the countryside. And this brings up another unrealistic point: Granted, we have been shown that Uncle Wang gives the restaurant crew bonus checks on New Year's Eve; but their devotion to Chen and her concoctions of Chop Suey is a display of loyalty nigh unto equal to followers of Hitler. Ask any management head if he can recruit workers who will let themselves be roughed up time and again, then who will come back for more with good-natured enthusiasm.





anything that sane.

Instead, they fight for the chance to go up against Huang Jen Chih. Which isn't a healthy thing to do.

Tang watches them charge into the fray, and sees each of them get wiped out. They fall, one after the other, into the dirt. Game little fighters they they are, they pick themselves up, renew their attacks, and end up swallowing more dust, along with—presumably—large quantities of blood and broken teeth.

Passivism does not last long in these films, and Tang finally confronts the two Martial Arts experts. If his followers weren't lying on the ground swallowing dust along with those broken teeth, I'd think they'd have bitten him on the legs for waiting so long to come to their aid. But no, they merely watch, glad to see Bob Wall and Huang Jen Chih get theirs.

Both Wall and Chih are professional Martial Artists, unlike the other foes that Lee faces in this movie, and therefore the visual trickery, such as the double *nunchaku* flashing about Lee's body, is unneeded.

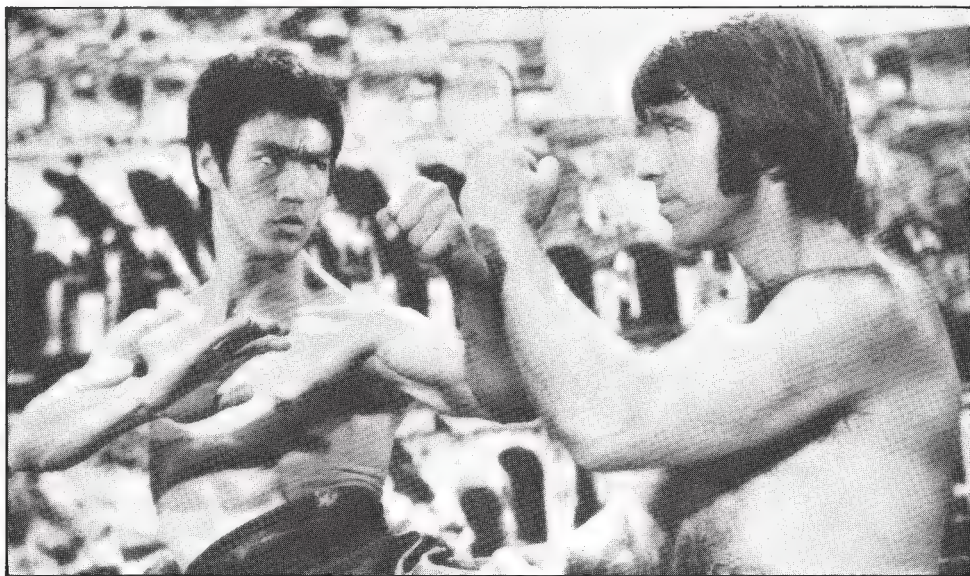
Bruce Lee took part, it is this moment of intense confrontation.

There is something more personal about this conflict than most others, and the Coliseum, naturally, evokes images of primordial combat—senseless tragedy played in the arenas of human suffering.

It would be interesting to hear what the individual members of an audience think of such a scene. I was sitting in the darkened theatre, noticing that though Norris announces Lee can find no escape from the Coliseum, it is very obvious that he could merely back track and leave anytime he pleased. But I was willing to ignore it, if only in the spirit of the upcoming fight.

Lee has stated that, "I don't call the fighting in my films violence. I call it action. Any action film borders somewhere between reality and fantasy." The fight with Chuck Norris has that ethereal quality about it; the mythical grandiose quality of muscle and sinew that Norman Mailer seems obsessed with.

It its own way, it is grand and elegant, this battering of



Wall's bout with Lee in this film probably influenced his getting the role of O'Hara in *ENTER THE DRAGON*.

After Lee has taught both Wall and Chih that he is, indeed, the China Dragon, he is led away from the others by the retreating figure of the Boss' aide. All at once, and completely without warning, Lee is in the Roman Coliseum. It is a compliment to Lee's forceful visual hymn to combat that this abrupt cut scarcely merits consideration during an initial viewing of the film.

Lee has moved into the realm which is his domain... the poetry of violence, if you will. The grace and lyricism of two mortal enemies locked in combat, sweat glistening on their flesh, stained and smeared, but valiant in their savagery. It is a bestial ballet. It moves and sways. It is real and unreal at the same moment.

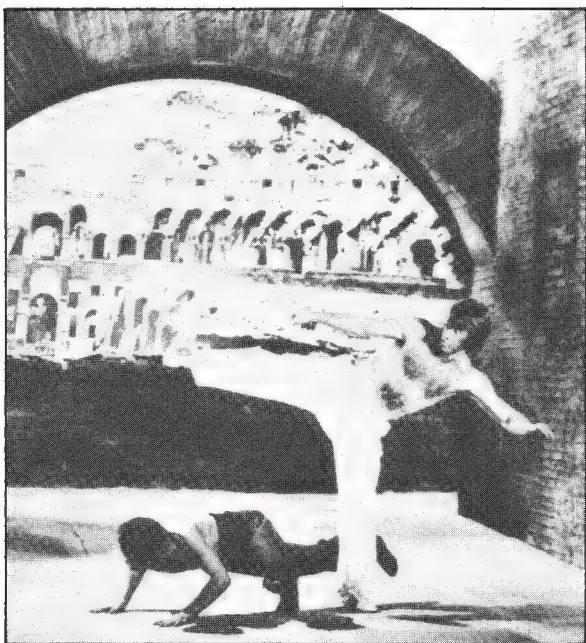
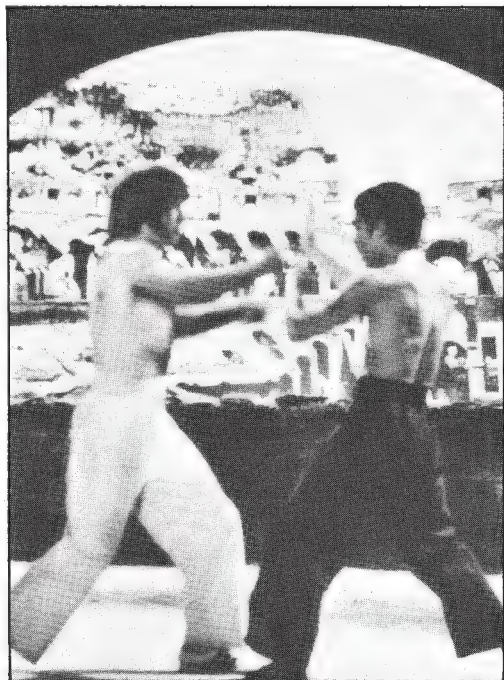
When Chuck Norris as Kuda faces Lee within the Coliseum walls, the film takes on a vibrancy and fluid style that it has at no other point. If *WAY OF THE DRAGON* has any value, other than as a film in which

flesh effected by a mastery of will and limb. The audience about me roars. My three year old daughter Lauren thinks it isn't nice what those men are doing up there on the screen. Perhaps she's wiser than all of us, because what they're doing isn't really nice, and the wounds and gashes that she calls "boo boos" are mashed flesh and broken bones that leave a man crippled.

There is a reality about this fight in the Coliseum that replaces the fantasy elements of its beginnings. But does the cheering audience get the meaning? When Lee breaks Kuda's hand—when Kuda's foot is turned into crushed bone and he limps painfully forward, mindlessly trying to resume the battle—is the audience aware, beneath their cheering, that there is a pathetic destruction of flesh here?

Kuda, unlike Han in *ENTER THE DRAGON*, is never really shown committing dastardly deeds. Obviously, the audience loves seeing Bruce Lee go into action, taking out whoever the opponent is.





But Lee meant much more than that in his films. Much more.

The question is, have the legions of his followers, through school corridors, playing it cool at the local MacDonalds (or the neighborhood equivalent thereof), have they glimpsed that agonized poet? Have they fathomed the nature of violence, perceived that it reduces people from what they once were, and diminishes the images that they had of themselves?

Or do they leave the theaters with endless visions of fairy tale violence...the kind of violence that fills television screens? Remember Lee's words. There is a difference between action and violence, despite what the righteous anti-TV violence crusader, Senator Pastore, might think. *THE NIGHT STALKER*, for instance, is not going to bring about the total collapse of western morals as we know them.

If you admire Lee and any of the principles that he stood for, then you must stop and analyze the meaning behind his actions, and understand what they meant.

Can you dig it?

Back to the scenario: As a kitten watches, Norris and Lee face each other. With the kind of surrealistic dignity that seems to appear only between opponents who practice the refinements of war, they address one another, and give each other a few moments to prepare for the grueling ordeal that is to come—almost as if they are inviting each other to a spot of tea.

As Lee prepares for battle, the audience is given the chance to gaze upon his attributes. Normally, this loving care to the exposure of flesh and the magnificence of the human body is reserved for voluptuous actresses in various states of undress. I am constantly amused by bedroom and/or bathroom scenes that have strategically-placed blankets and/or suds. You get what I mean. But Lee is preparing for a performance of choreographed

combat, and he flexes shoulders and arms in an amazing display of physical fitness. The President (whomever he may be these days) would love to have him in his physical fitness program. No doubt about it. There is a sense of confidence about Lee, certainly bordering on arrogance, as he makes those shoulder muscles bunch into an incredible mass of strength.

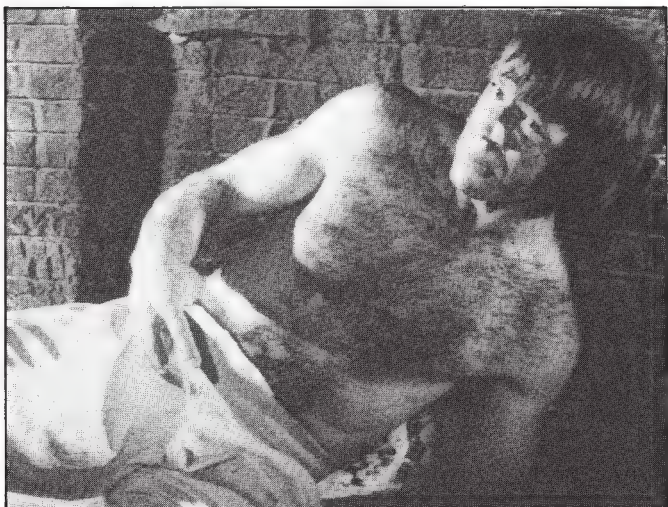
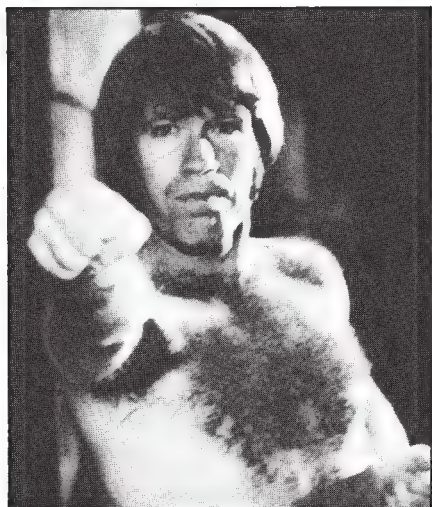
In analyzing the mystique of Bruce Lee (and despite whatever qualms I have about the misuse of advertising and the general composition of *WAY OF THE DRAGON*, Lee does retain his mystique), it is perhaps this self awareness—the aura of self confidence—that most of us, subconsciously, like about Lee. Wouldn't it be tough to have that supreme sense of worth, that knowledge of mastery over the stifling organized routine of an increasingly impersonal society? You bet it would, man...and none of them mothers would dare mess around then.

Ah, what bold thoughts fill those darkened theaters.

The fight begins building with genuine tension that is lacking from the rest of the movie. Lee opts for slow motion movements, but they are few and well used, and serve to re-establish his command of the medium. The fights in *WAY OF THE DRAGON* are reminiscent, in vitality, of the stunts performed in the later film *ENTER*; and it is obvious that many of these scenes owe their effectiveness to Lee, and not to director Robert Clouse. In the recent release, *GOLDEN NEEDLES*, the producers and director of *ENTER* did not have the benefit of Lee's innate sense of pacing and visuals for action scenes, and it showed. One viewing of *WAY OF THE DRAGON*, with all its sloppiness, confirms that the vivid display of acrobatics and amazing feats were carefully overseen by Lee.

The fight turns grim as Lee defeats his opponent; Kuda is completely broken, in flesh and spirit, before





death descends upon him.

Lee departs the Coliseum, without any trouble from locked doors, and he is immediately out in the country. Returning to the scene of the initial battle, he finds that Uncle Wang has killed two of the restaurant helpers.

Boy, what some people won't do to avoid giving out bonuses.

Wang rants and raves something about going back to his own homeland, and about how the Boss will pay him enough to get back to his family. Which is funny, 'cause I was under the impression that Chen was a part of *this* old homestead. Oh, well, such treachery should not be so closely scrutinized, since the Boss arrives on the scene presently and all hell breaks loose, leaving Uncle Wang dead.

And do you believe that name?

The final scene has Tang telling Chen and her helpers that he must leave; then he turns and walks off into a vaporish grey distance of brooding melancholy, his figure diminishing . . . altering from consistency to wraith.

For that moment, one can almost believe this is the last film of the Dragon—that some clairvoyant mage had predetermined events and a suitable finale was selected.

Mirages.

Fading.

The way of the Dragon vs. the mass-sell menace. For the viewers who have wanted more of Lee, this has been a chance to watch him in action. The distributors have, in turn, found the release financially beneficial to them. Both sides win.

In a way.

If the ad blitz had been tempered with wit and grace rather than distortions, WAY OF THE DRAGON would carry less of a stigmatic aura. But I can't help thinking, just in passing, that it might have been something to see, the China Dragon—or just plain Lee—up against the mass-sell menace that marks our conscious with jingles and rhymes and promises of paradise.

Mirages.

Fading.

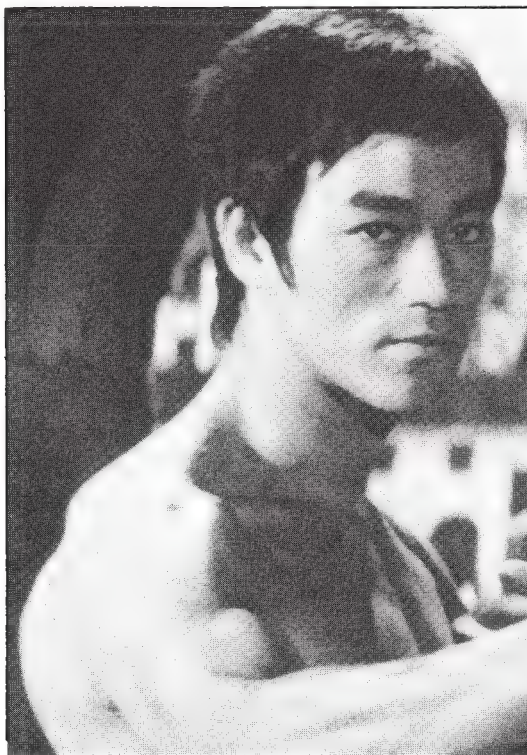
The film has ended.

Bruce Lee is gone.

Again.



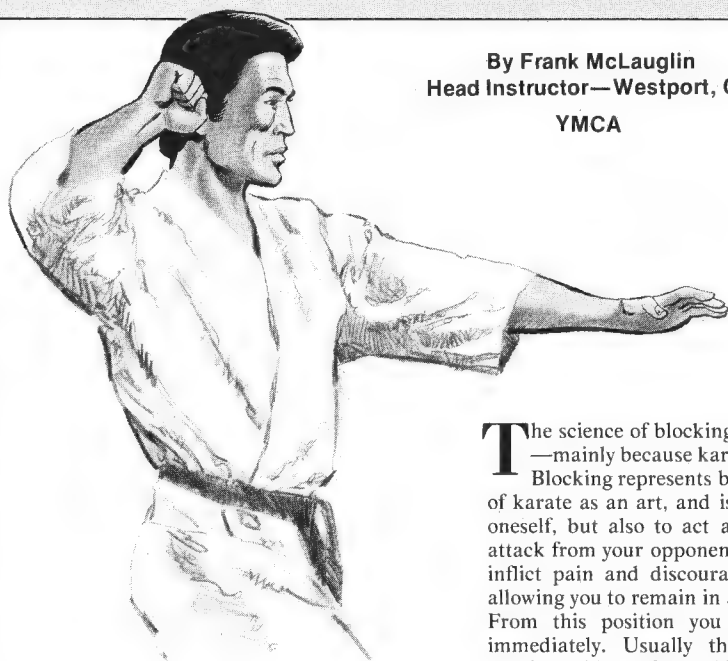
—Don McGregor



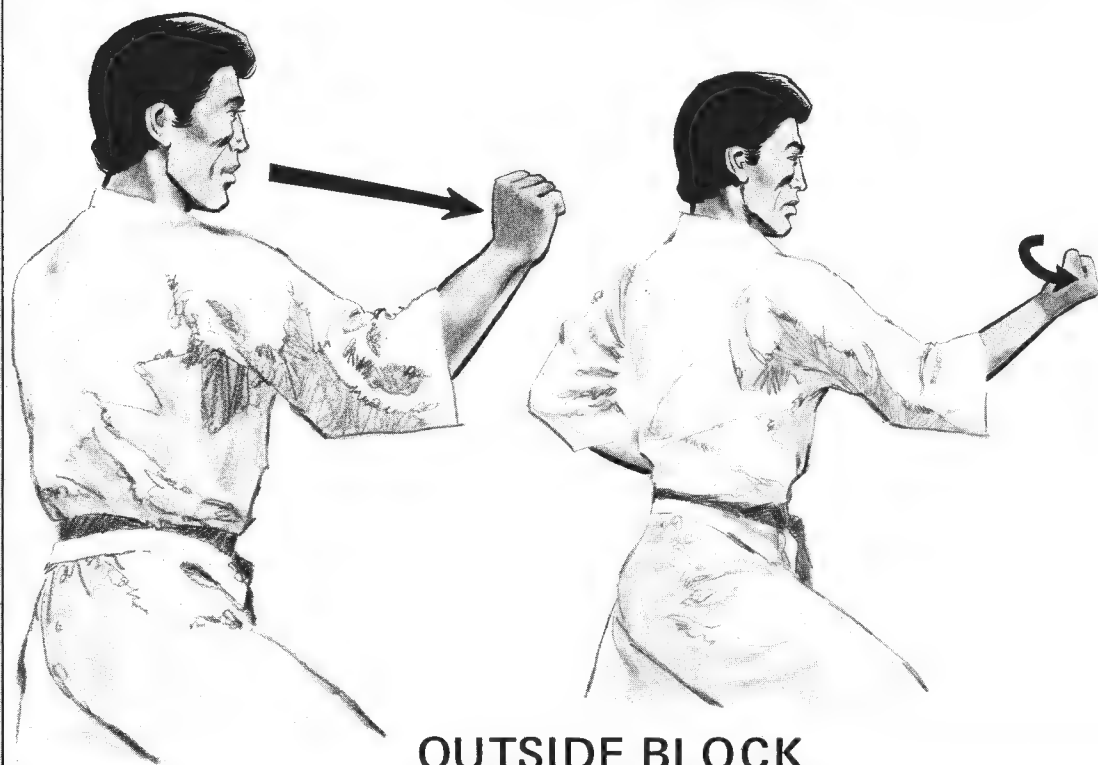


# THE BASIC TECHNIQUE OF BLOCKING

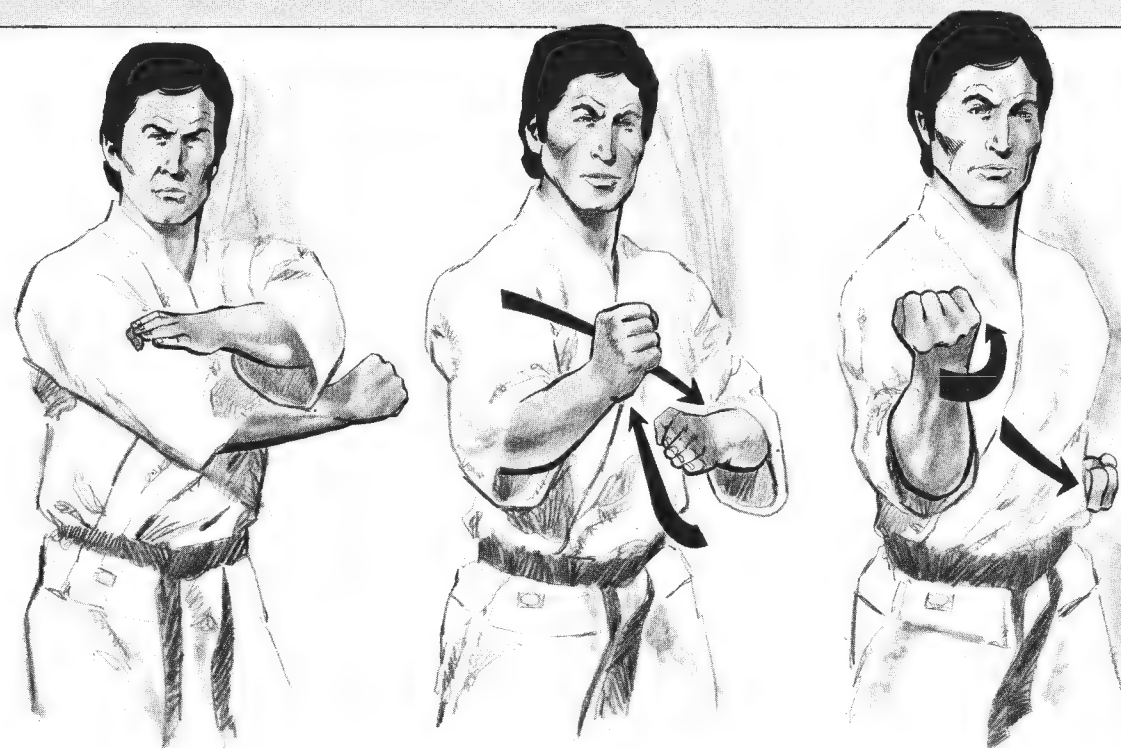
By Frank McLaughlin  
Head Instructor—Westport, C.T.  
YMCA



The science of blocking is highly developed in karate—mainly because karate is basically a defensive art. Blocking represents both the beginning and the end of karate as an art, and is designed to not only protect oneself, but also to act as an aid in stopping further attack from your opponent. A well “focused” block will inflict pain and discourage your assailant, as well as allowing you to remain in a stable and balanced posture. From this position you are ready to counterattack immediately. Usually the first step in self defense requires a block of some kind, and without it you are lost.



OUTSIDE BLOCK



## INSIDE BLOCK

The type of block you use depends on the form of attack, for the most part, but you must keep in mind the counter attack you intend to use. It's a good idea to practice blocks and counter attacks in combination so you can perform these moves automatically. The forearm block (ude-uke) is used to defend against attacks to the solar plexus or the head.

The Chinese karateka often refer to this technique as the “whipping branch”. To realize the analogy, imagine a branch of a tree being pulled back as far as it will go, and then being suddenly released.

There are two ways to use the forearm block—the outside block, where you use the outside of the forearm as the striking surface, and the inside block which utilizes the inner surface of the forearm to strike with.

The outside block begins by swinging your blocking forearm from the side of the head to the front of the body. At the same time, snap your fist outward and focus your energy at the point of the block. Keep your elbow directly in front of your body as you complete the block. Be prepared to counter-attack from this position.

The inside block begins with the arm bent and the fist of the blocking hand near the opposite armpit and

beneath the opposite elbow. Swing the forearm directly to your front and twist your hand outward, so that at the point of impact the palm of the fist faces upward; don't swing your elbow past the front of the body, and be ready to counter attack immediately.

The knife-hand block also is used to defend against an attack to the solar plexus. Begin with your blocking hand alongside your head, on the opposite side, and drive your forearm as you snap your hand inward. At the same time, your other hand is quickly withdrawn to the chest, palm up.

The downward block (Gedan-Barai) is especially effective in defending against a kick to the groin, abdomen or solar plexus.

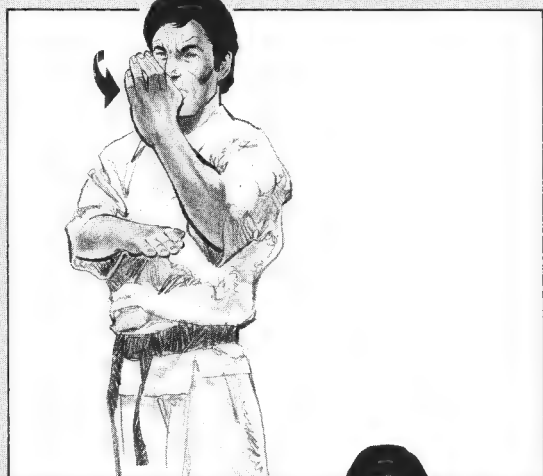
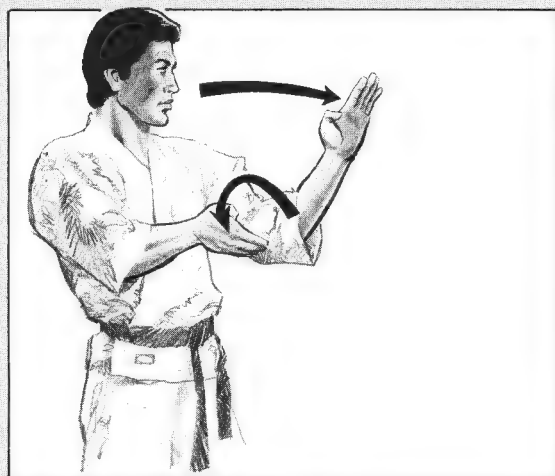
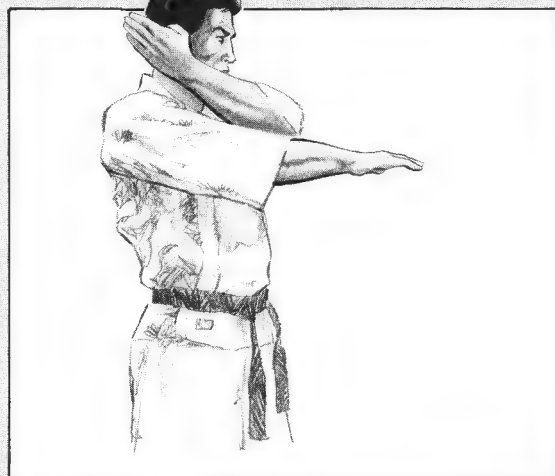
Again, begin the block by swinging the fist of the blocking hand downward from a position near the opposite ear. Use a strong deflecting motion with a tightly-clenched fist, twisting your arm so that it is fully extended in front of your body at the moment of impact. The purpose of all the blocks is to render your opponent's attack ineffective, and quite often a block is used to hook, deflect and press away—as well as to strike.



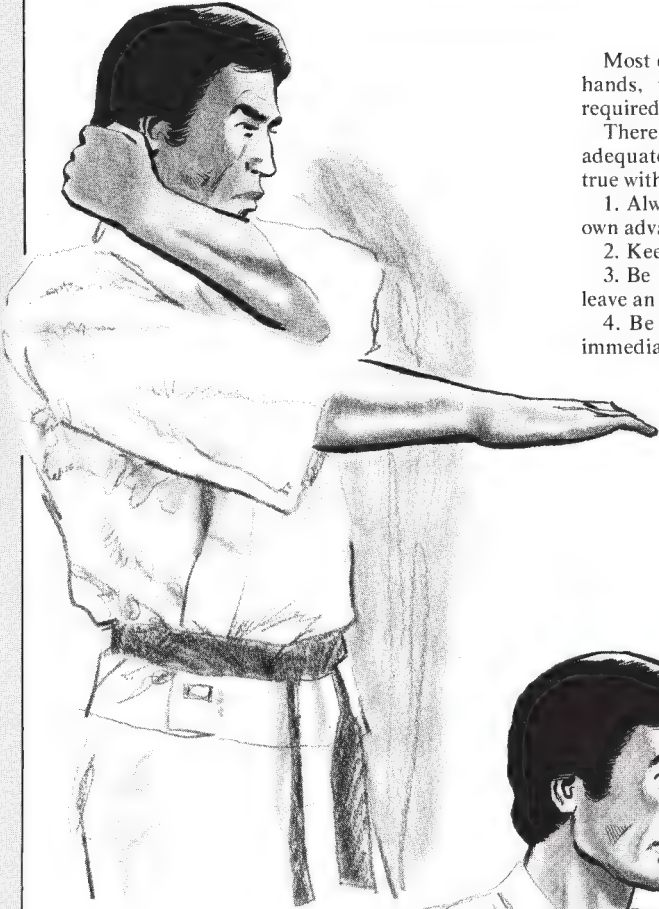
# KNIFE HAND BLOCK

SIDE VIEW

FRONT VIEW



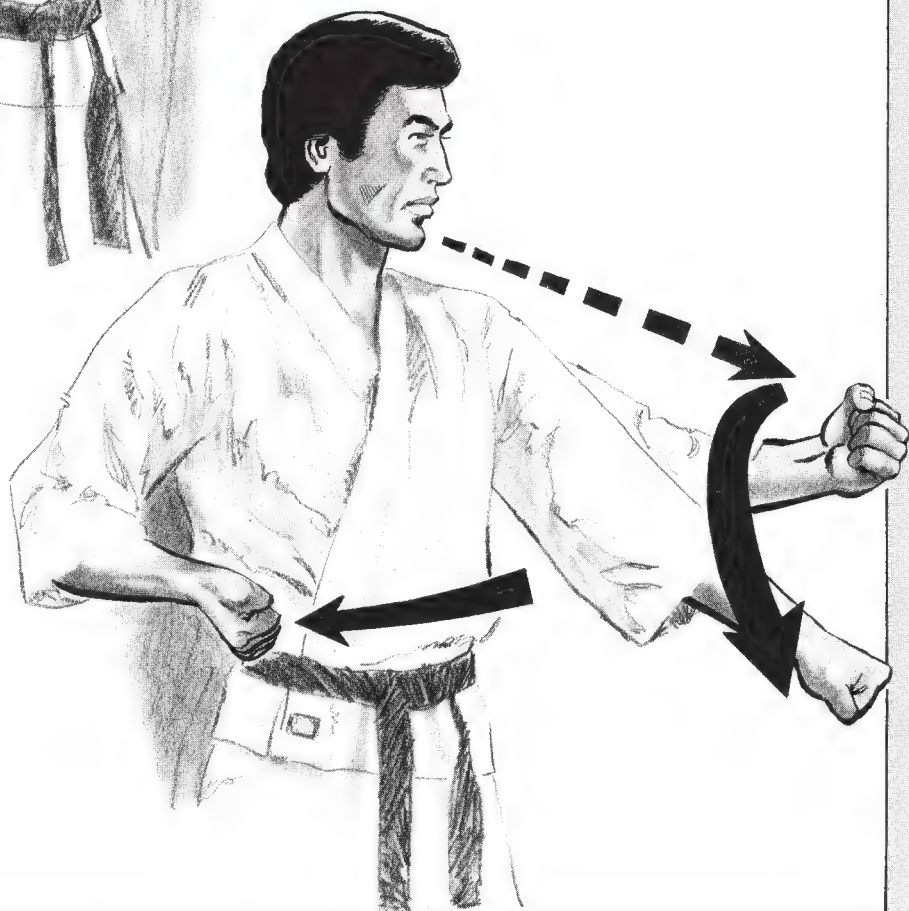




Most of these blocking moves are performed with the hands, rather than the legs, because of the speed required in blocking.

There are many other blocks too numerous to cover adequately in this article, but the same general rules hold true with all of them:

1. Always try to turn your opponent's strength to your own advantage.
2. Keep proper balance and posture.
3. Be sure your position during the block does not leave an opening for your opponent.
4. Be prepared to begin your counter-attack immediately.





# PROLOGUE:







## THE **SONS** OF THE **TIGER**!



Writer: **BILL MANTLO**

Artists: **GEORGE PEREZ & BOB McLEOD**













AN ANNOYANCE I HAVE BEEN  
COMMENDED TO REMOVE!



WHEW! HE **DOES**  
GO ON, DOESN'T  
HE?

YEAH, BOB, JUST  
LIKE A 'B' MOVIE  
VILLAIN!

HEY, GUYS!  
THIS AIN'T  
NO MOVIE!

**ENOUGH!**



WE WISH  
TO CAUSE  
YOU NO  
**PAIN**

**ANY**  
PAIN YOU  
EXPERIENCE  
... YOU WILL  
CAUSE  
**YOUR-  
SELVES!**



WE EXPECT YOU TO  
**FURNISH YOUR  
OWN HELLS!**

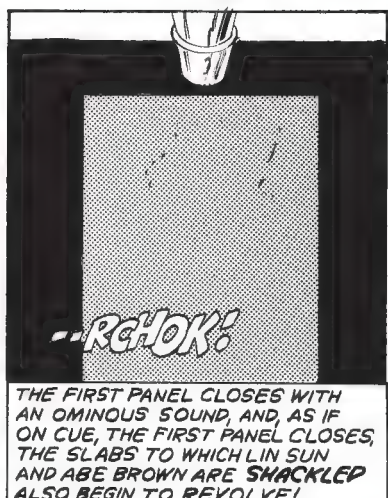
HEY,  
GUYS,  
IF I DON'T  
**SEE YOU**  
AGAIN--

**WHRR--**



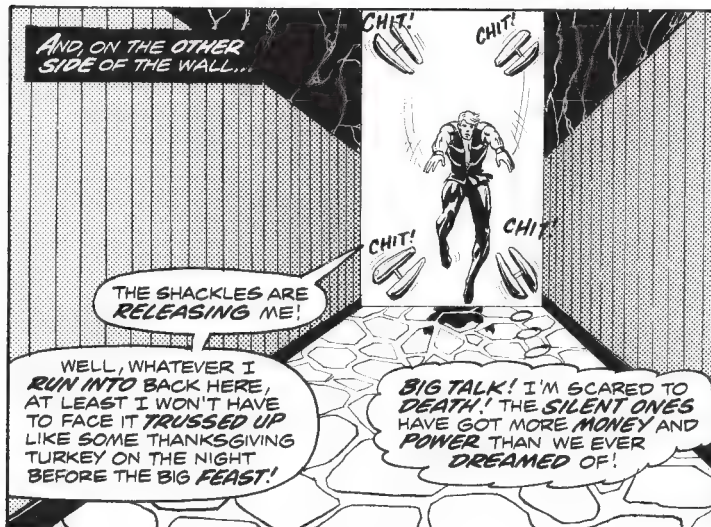
--DON'T  
THINK IT  
HASN'T  
BEEN  
**FUN!**

**--RRRR--**



**--RRHOK!**

THE FIRST PANEL CLOSES WITH  
AN OMINOUS SOUND, AND, AS IF  
ON CUE, THE FIRST PANEL CLOSES,  
THE SLABS TO WHICH LIN SUN  
AND ABE BROWN ARE **SHACKLED**  
ALSO BEGIN TO REVOLVE!



AND, ON THE OTHER  
SIDE OF THE WALL...

THE SHACKLES ARE  
**RELEASING ME!**

WELL, WHATEVER I  
**RUN INTO** BACK HERE,  
AT LEAST I WON'T HAVE  
TO FACE IT **TRUSSED UP**  
LIKE SOME THANKSGIVING  
TURKEY ON THE NIGHT  
BEFORE THE **BIG FEAST!**

**BIG TALK!** I'M SCARED TO  
**DEATH!** THE **SILENT ONES**  
HAVE GOT MORE **MONEY** AND  
**POWER** THAN WE EVER  
**DREAMED OF!**

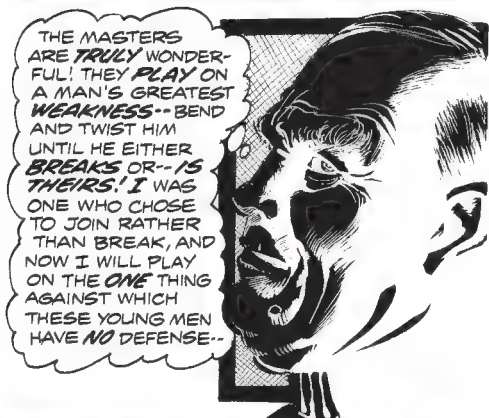
**CHIT!** **CHIT!**  
**CHIT!** **CHIT!**



AND ALL WE'VE GOT  
ARE SOME **ORIENTAL**  
**NECKLACES!** A BOY  
SCOUT **OATH** AND  
SOME FANCY **KUNG**  
**FU MOVES!**

**BROTHER!** I  
SURE HOPE THE  
CAVALRY GETS  
US OUT OF  
**THIS ONE!**





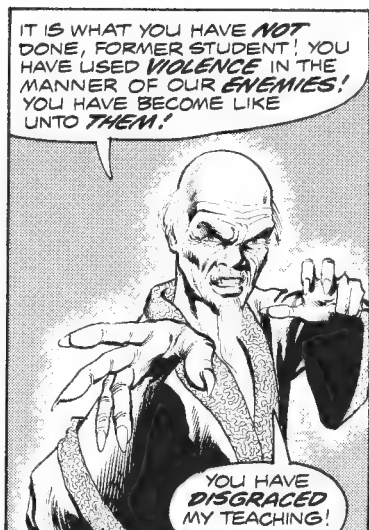
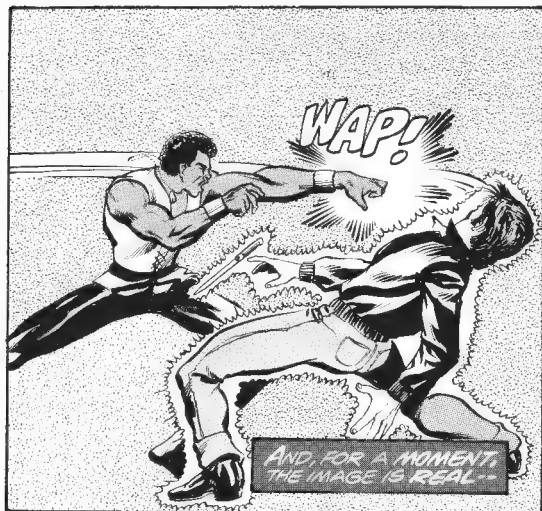




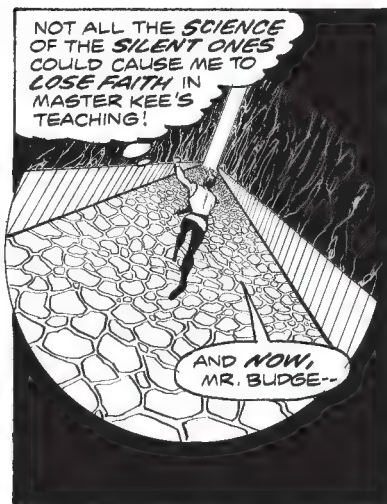








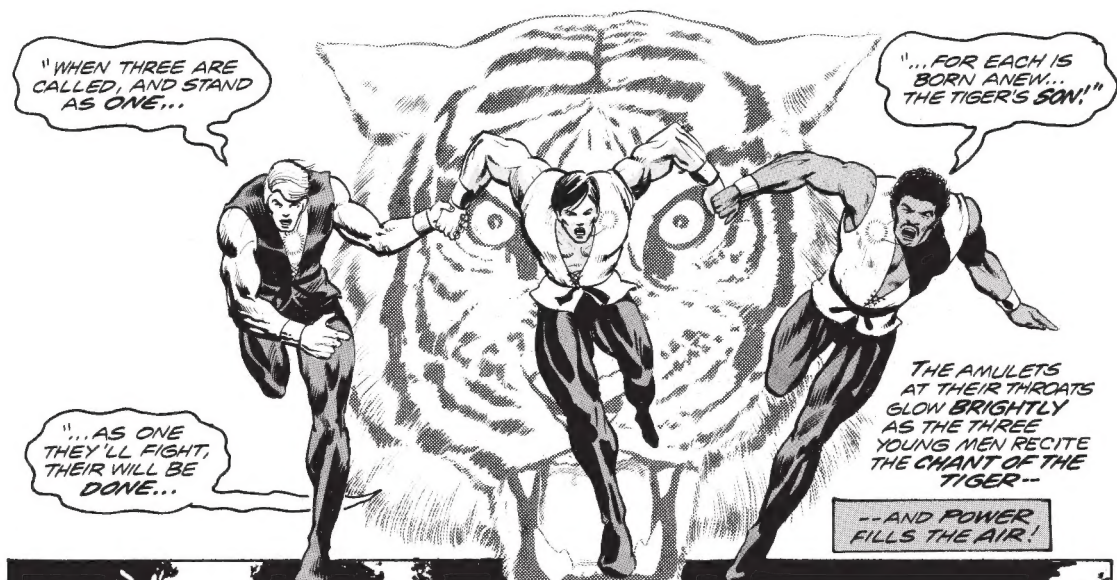




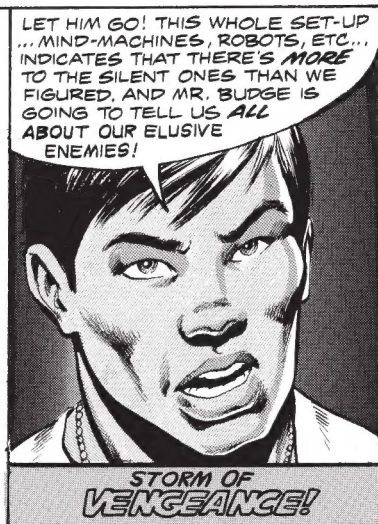
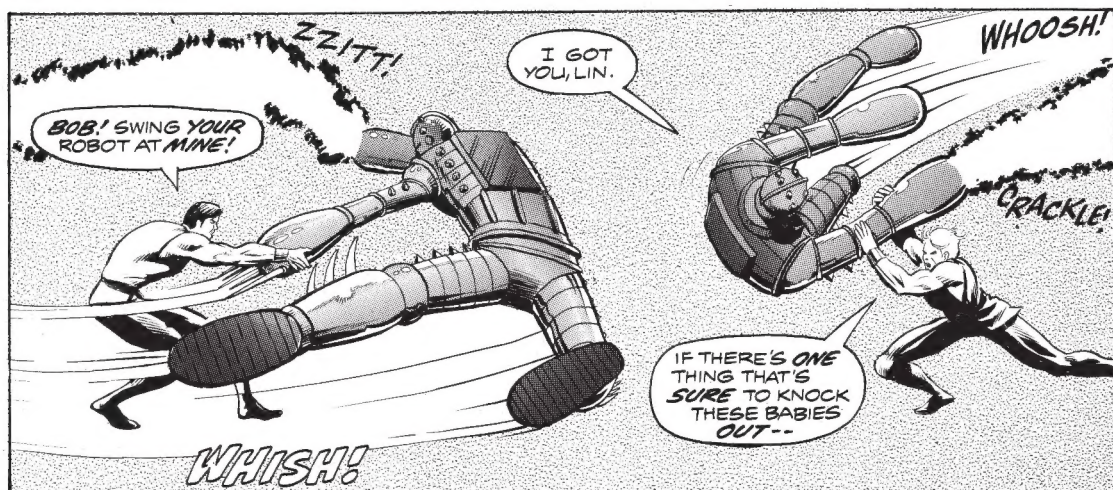






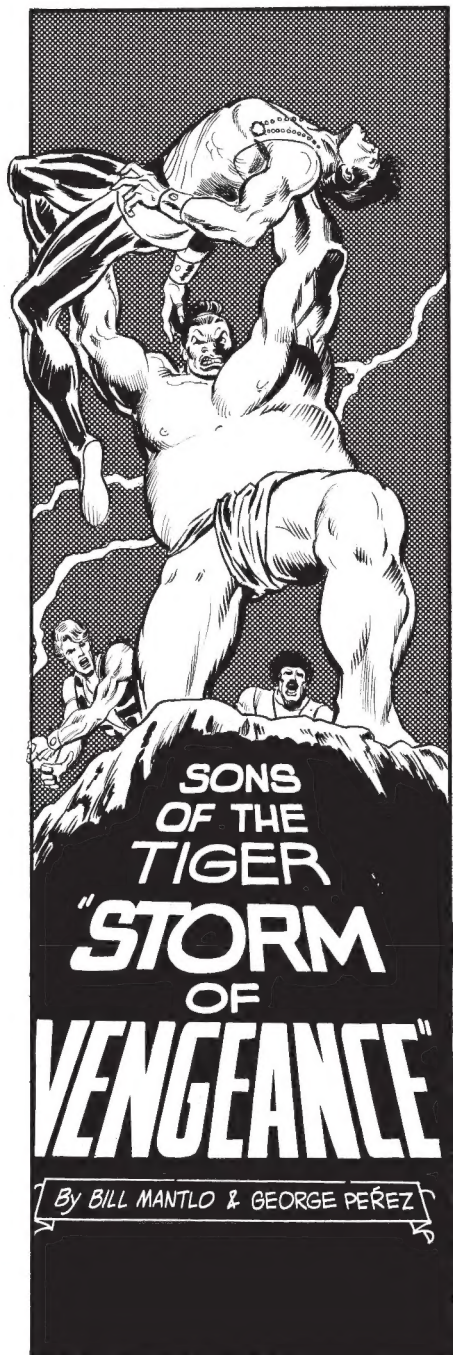








# NEXT ISSUE



A MODERN DAY

## ***JACK THE RIPPER!***

STALKS THE CITY  
STREETS...AND  
SHANG-CHI SETS  
HIMSELF UP AS  
HIS NEXT VICTIM!

A MARTIAL  
ARTS  
SUSPENSE  
EPIC!

WITH  
THE NIGHT STORM  
BUILDS IN INTENSE  
FURY AS THE SONS  
OF THE TIGER PIT  
THEIR COMBINED  
MIGHT AGAINST  
THE POWERS OF A  
GIGANTIC  
SUMO  
WARRIOR

PLUS  
A SPECIAL SECTION  
ON  
SAMURAI  
FIGHTING  
FILMS  
WITH PHOTOS THAT'LL  
CUT YOU TO THE  
QUICK (WHEREVER  
THAT IS).

COMING YOUR WAY  
ON DECEMBER 3rd!  
NO SELF-RESPECTING  
MARTIAL ARTS MAVEN  
WILL MISS IT!







*Shadowcat*

